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POLISH LOCAL INDUSTRY PRODUCES PLOWS,
HARROWS, AND THRESHING MACHINES

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The National Economic Plan for 1954 calls for a great increase in the delivery of farm machinery and tools. Part of this task, especially the production of plows, harrows, and threshing machines, must be realized by the WZPTs [Wojewodzki Zarzad Przemyslu Terenowego, Wojewodztwo Administration for Local Industry] in Lodz, Krakow, Lublin, and Rzeszow.

The following information on production of farm equipment is in response to questions put to Marczewski, the director of the Lodz WZPT:

"During 1954, we [the Lodz WZPT] are undertaking greater production of goods to meet agricultural needs. Of our 16 enterprises, four will manufacture farm machines exclusively. The Pabianice, Zdunska Wola and Piotrkow metal-products factories of local industry will manufacture threshing machines, and the Gidle Metal Products Plant of Local Industry (Gidelskie Zaklady Metalowe Przemyslu Terenowego) will manufacture plows and harrows. Besides this, many of our plants will undertake the production of a variety of small items during 1954 to meet the needs of villages. This production will include wire fencing, window hinges, nails, stove parts, potato diggers, metal buckets, watering cans, chopping knives, kettle handles (sprezynki), wooden buckets, wash tubs, hoes and hoe handles, cheese presses, mangles, metal parts for horse collars, coal shovels, metal shoemaker's stands, poker, metal washstands, curtain rods, clothes sprinklers, ironing boards, and many other items.

"The Gidle Metal Products Plant of Local Industry is one of our best enterprises and has specialized for many years in the manufacture of plows and harrows. According to the plan for 1954, it is to manufacture 28,000 plows of two types. The Gidle plant now shows a profit in its operations but previously did not. The reason for its previous losses was that it formerly had to sell plows at an established price of 2,000 zloty, although the estimated cost of the plow was 3,000 zloty. During 1953, the plant was able to overcome this difficulty and to close 1953 without a loss."

The old settlement of Gidle now is the seat of the Gmina People's Council [the "gmina" administrative division was abolished in 1954] and is located 10-20 kilometers from the Radomsko railroad station, along the highway joining Warsaw and Stalinogrod. The inhabitants of this settlement, besides tilling the soil, find employment in two local enterprises: the "Gidlanka" work co-operative and the Gidle Metal Products Plants of Local Industry. Experienced metalworkers of the locality, who have had their trade handed down to them from father to son, work in these enterprises.

Over 100 Gidle inhabitants work in the Gidle Metal Products Plant of Local Industry. The small, square, one-story buildings do not create much of an impression on the viewer. K. Milejski, the director of the plant and a young and energetic manager, when asked about the plows piled up in the yard covered with snow, declared that transportation was the chief complaint. The plant does have its own means of transportation, and neither private individuals nor the PKS [Panstwowa Komunikacja Samochodowa, State Motor Transportation] always want to provide transportation for the plant's product to the distant railroad station. The plant faces this same difficulty in hauling raw materials from the railroad stations. At critical times, the WZPT in Lodz mobilizes transportation facilities from other plants and sends them to the plant, but such sporadic aid is not conducive to systematic operations. The plant has ordered a truck from the WZPT and has the credit for it, but whether it will get the truck soon is doubtful.

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According to the National Economic Plan, the Gidle Metal Products Plant of Local Industry will manufacture in 1954 a total of 28,000 plows, 4,000 spring harrows, 5,000 drills, 300 disc drills, 300 meadow drills, and 2,500 plowshares. It also will manufacture, from Czech models, 35 large mechanical shovels for unloading sand from wagons. In addition, according to the local plan, it will furnish the farmers with the following: about 150 tons of spare parts (300 tons is the plan for the WZPT in Lodz), including teeth for harrows, knives for straw choppers, discs for disc plows, threshing-machine parts, plowshares for drillers, nine types of hoes, farm hinges, gate chains, beet choppers, knives for choppers, potato diggers, markers for planting potatoes, anvils for hammering scythes, bands for reinforcing scythes, iron-work for wagons, heads for hammers and axes, and hooks for walls. The plant will also manufacture 2,300 crossbeams (40 tons) for construction. It also will fill orders of metallurgical plants for narrow-gauge tracks and tipplers.

Over the opposition of some of the older workers, the high cost of production of plows was overcome in 1953 in the following manner: In May of that year, the craft system of work was reorganized along assembly-line methods (potokowy) of production. The electrical system was expanded, machines were moved around, and new machines were added. Formerly the plow or the harrow was completed by a single craftsman who took about 5 hours to finish a single plow. Under the new system, with several people completing only one process each, the time has been cut down to 2 1/2 hours. Real costs were also reduced. The workers were convinced, and the cost of Gidle plows was brought down to the established price. The work could be made even more productive now if the plant were further mechanized. According to the WZPT in Lodz, this will take place in 1954 with investment credits.

According to Jozef Bartnik, the plant's chief of production, the spring production campaign will bring a decisive production "break." The plant will manufacture its yearly norm of 2,000 seeders (obsypniki) by the end of the first quarter, 3,960 seeding harrows (of the annual plan of 5,000) by the end of the First quarter, and 15,000 of the yearly plan of 26,000 plows by the end of May. Besides this, distributors will also receive a large assortment of garden tools.

Stefan Andrzejewski, a foreman with 37 years' experience in the plant, who first opposed the new system, admits to the high quality of the plows now produced and states that soon the plant will be able to use its own trade mark, which has been granted to it by the Patent Office.

Wladyslaw Matyjaszczyk, another foreman, stated that his brigade uses the Korabielnikov work method to conserve materials.

Of the young workers in the factory, 10 percent are women.

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